

LONDON, NOVEMBER 22, 1848.

If all the statements and opinions which I have communicated to you since the 24th of last February, in relation to the position and prospects of the nations on the Continent of Europe, could be collated and compared, the result would be a mass of contradiction—not more striking or more contradictory, however, than is the present existing public feeling and opinion upon the same subject.

Certainly nothing has been done during the last nine months which has had any tendency to allay, much less subside, the tornado of contention and strife which began its career over Europe last February. No result whatever has been arrived at, if we except the completion of the debates on the new Constitution of the Republic of France, and its cold adoption by the People of Paris—we will not say the people of France, for we have not yet received any information whatever of the reception which it has met with in the provinces. In this instance, Paris must be taken as France; and, taken as such, we must hold that France has adopted her republican institutions in a very apathetic manner. There is much more enthusiasm exhibited at the formal proclamation of an hereditary British sovereign. This fact, coupled with the difference in the character of the two people, and the peculiar excitement which we might naturally suppose would be caused by that important event, leads us to conclude that France is republican only in name, and that M. THIERS and his friends of the monarchical school will have very little trouble in bringing back the imperial or kingly rule. Should Louis Napoleon be elected President, the work will be neither more than half done; the remaining steps will be neither numerous, nor startling, nor difficult. Holding, as we do, and have always done, that France is not a soil wherein republicanism can take deep and healthy root, we think that it will be best for her to cease cultivating it as soon as possible, and turn her attention to something more congenial to the character of her people, and their habits, feelings, and tendencies. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that France is yet far from a state of rest and quietness; but we are of opinion that, whatever may be her ultimate state, she will reach it without any great public commotion, or any repetition of the atrocities of her first revolution.

But if we look at GERMANY and ITALY, and SPAIN and PORTUGAL, we shall find the two former with more of the elements of discord and strife dispersed through their entire length and breadth than existed at any former period of this eventful year; and as for the two latter, there seems to be a deeper fog of apathy and torpid inaction settled upon them than could have been expected in any portion of Europe at this period of progress and enlightenment. These are the facts of the case; the conclusions drawn from them are as various as they well can be, and as contradictory as the feelings, wishes, and political tendencies of the parties who form them. It is hard to get a good general view of the real state of the present; it is impossible to predicate any thing as to the future. One thing only appears to be certain, and that is, we are very far from the end; nor have the chief actors in the busy scene any very definite object in view; or, if they have, they are quite uncertain as to what are the best means of obtaining it. A system of expediency, a living on from day to day, an adoption of whatever appears best calculated to meet any approaching emergency, seems to be the policy of leading political men on the continent, rather than any well-matured course of action, any steady, straightforward, and consistent progress towards a desired attainment. This policy has been adopted (not, however, by all with equally praiseworthy motives) by LAMARTINE, CAVAIGNAC, the King of PRUSSIA, the Archduke JOHN, and even by the Emperor of AUSTRIA, no doubt upon the representations of his political advisers.

Can we expect any settled result so long as this is the political policy of leaders and rulers? And how, it may fairly be asked, whilst political opinion is so immature as it is with the masses of mankind, are Emperors and Kings and Presidents to decide what is best to be done? If the People of continental Europe were asked individually what they want, and what form of Government they wish their respective countries to adopt, nine-tenths of them would not be able to give any rational reply. Thus it is that nine-tenths of the People at large, having no knowledge or will of their own, become the tools by which designing and dangerous demagogues gain power and influence; and from this arises the necessity that is felt by men of principle, who hold places of trust, to apparently abandon that principle, and play off these demagogues one against the other, so as to neutralize their power and keep the great interests of society intact and secure. We do not see any end to this system at present, or any very immediate prospect of Europe's tranquillity. The mischief has arisen, not from reform being now unnecessary and revolution uncalled for, but from the former having been undertaken before the People had determined what reformation they needed; and the latter commenced before they had counted the cost and prepared themselves to meet all its consequences. We know we shall not be understood as endeavoring to palliate the atrocities which have been perpetrated at Vienna, Berlin, Prague, Frankfurt, and elsewhere, by whichever party has had the upper hand: now by an infuriated populace, and now by a revengeful monarch, or a half civilized general at the head of a barbaric army. We are aiming to account for them, and lament that the vista of the future does not open brightly before us, and show, at no great distance, a welcome termination to this sickening state of things.

We, in this island home, have also our contemplated reforms and revolutions, but they are of that description which need not, and will not, we trust, involve any breach of our peace, any invasion of our quiet. Our people, or at least a great majority of them, (thanks to our free institutions and the power of the press) know what they want, and know the proper way of obtaining it; and our rulers also feel that what the people want they will sooner or later obtain, and that it is not safe policy to deny or thwart their reasonable wishes. If they cannot prudently grant all, they will grant a part; if they cannot introduce reform, economy, and retrenchment all at once, they will introduce them gradually as opportunity offers, and the people will patiently wait so long as they see that these opportunities are not neglected. It will be thus with parliamentary and financial reform, the two great objects towards which the public mind is at present turned. There is a society at Liverpool, called the "Financial Reform Association," which is throwing much information before the people in its proceedings and reports, and this not in an exciting incendiary manner or in the spirit of demagogism, (to use a word of Sidney Smith's), but in plain straightforward statements, accompanied with simple and convincing illustrations and arguments. The following short notice of a speech made at a late meeting of this association may serve to show the nature of its proceedings, and the effects which they must necessarily produce upon the public mind. The national debt is stated to be eight hundred millions sterling, and the population of the United Kingdom twenty-eight millions; then, of course, every individual man, woman, or child is twenty-nine pounds in debt, and the payment of the interest of this debt saddles each one with an annual payment of twenty shillings sterling. The support of the army for the present year costs each in-

dividual 14s. 3d. The standing army consists, after thirty-three years of peace, of no less than 123,995 rank and file, officered by 5,734 gentlemen: "men" (says the speaker) who spurn an honest trade or the profession of a merchant, but who, nevertheless, dabble in the commission market for their own aggrandizement. This army is kept up," continues the speaker, "for fear there should be a war, and for the protection of our colonies and our large exports to them. Our colonies cost us £4,000,000 a year, and our exports to them amount to about £9,000,000 annually; so that it costs us about 9s. to protect every 20s. worth of exports." "Our exports to the United States, in 1844, amounted to very nearly as much as those to our colonies. The latter cost us £4,000,000, the former £15,000, for diplomatic salaries, &c.; and yet we pay our Ambassadors at Washington more than the Americans pay their President! The expenses of the civil Government of British Guiana, with its 100,000 population, is £29,000; that of the State of New York, with its 2,500,000, only about £6,000. We pay to our four Governors in our North American colonies £2,500 more than the thirty States of the Union pay their thirty Governors!"

Looking at the expenses and composition of the army, it is found that each man in the Horse Guards costs (exclusive of horse) £58 14s. 4d. per annum; in the first Dragoon Guards £55 15s. 4d. do.; in the Grenadier Guards £62 4s. 10d. do.; in the last regiment of infantry £28 17s. do. Now, why this great difference? A Cavalry regiment has usually about 28 officers, the Grenadier Guards has 120! A regiment has generally one lieutenant colonel, this has 30! There are usually 9 captains and lieutenants, the Grenadier Guards has 30! The entire number of generals in the army is 69; there are also 131 lieutenant generals and 84 major generals, in all 284 generals; being more than two generals for every regiment! There are also 341 colonels in the army and 684 lieutenant colonels; making a total of 1,025, or seven commanding officers to each regiment! "Of these officers, there are 206 colonels receiving retired pay at £1 7s. 6d. per day for doing nothing." "But you will say," continues the speaker, "why are such monstrous abuses allowed?" "Simply because we have a law which is called 'primogeniture,' which Adam Smith says means 'a custom, which, in order to enrich one, beggars all the rest of the children'; and this law is intended to preserve the great historic names of our ancient nobility! Well, the younger sons are thus left out, and, being too proud to beg, and considering it beneath their dignity to engage in any thing useful, must have gentlemanly allowances granted them; and their parents not being willing to do this, the nation, through the Parliament, is gently persuaded to grant these allowances; and so we find these younger sons in swarms in the army, navy, church, colonies, and home and foreign Courts. But you will naturally say, the House of Commons vote the supplies, and should not allow such extravagance."

The following statement is then given of the constitution of the present House of Commons. Among the 656 members, there are 250 who are officers, or the immediate connections of officers; there are 133 brothers, sons, and near relatives of peers; 56 baronets belonging to the aristocracy, and 85 landed proprietors married to sisters, daughters, &c. of peers. Some of the members, however, stand in more than one of these lists, and some in them all; but collecting the individual names there are 381 persons, or a standing majority, "in what is called the People's house, who are interested in keeping up a war establishment and official extravagance. This extravagance will continue until the House of Commons is made in truth the Commons House of Parliament; and until the middle and industrious classes of the country have that fair share in the administration of their own affairs which their wealth, their talent, their industry, and their morality deserve."

One great design of this and similar associations appears to be to inform the public, particularly the working classes, of the great superiority, as to equality of operation and burden, of direct taxation over indirect. To show how this latter mode, by taxing heavily the necessities of life, bears unequally upon the poorer and middle classes, they give a statement of the duties derived from the following articles for the year which ended January 5, 1847:

Spirits, foreign and domestic	£8,376,078
Tobacco	5,112,000
Malt	5,084,650
Tobacco and snuff	4,319,088
Sugar and molasses	4,050,418
Wine	1,892,242
Timber	1,133,672
Excise licenses	1,086,155
Soap	912,805
Paper	708,814
Coffee	756,838
Corn	723,600
Bricks, &c.	638,422
Currants and raisins	470,263
Hops	396,265
Stamps	323,377
Post horse duties	179,432
Butter and cheese	224,832
Candles and tallow	89,888
Glass	18,822
Miscellaneous	845,706
Total	£37,288,803

"Certainly the first necessities of life—indeed the very essentials, without which it cannot be maintained—are food and shelter, not to particularize fuel and clothing. And how are these affected by the above list of taxes? All are enhanced in price, and placed above the reach of millions. Bread, cheese, butter, sugar, and currants, in the way of food; and as drinks, tea, coffee, beer, and wine. As regards shelter, the materials which furnish it escape not, as witness timber, bricks, &c. With which of these can the poor, can any man dispense, without suffering material want? While to exist without the use, or with an insufficient use, of every one of them, is a state of wretchedness hard to conceive, but which is experienced by thousands. Secondary to these, only from the fact that they are not essential to life, are tobacco, soap, candles, paper, &c., the taxes upon which articles become, after those on food, the most objectionable that can be conceived to large classes of the community. To what, under such a crushing load of taxation, has the poor man to look for comfort and happiness? Shelter, food, fuel, all taxed, all put beyond his reach, except the almost spontaneous productions of the earth, potatoes and mud and water."

A report of the Association then proceeds to show that out of every three pence which the poor man spends in tea, two pence goes to the Government in the shape of tax; that malt liquor is much increased in price to the consumers, who are principally among the lower class, by the duty on the raw material; and that the price of tobacco, nine-tenths of which is consumed by the working classes, is increased nearly tenfold by the duty.

Such is the mode which is now taking to give the people at large some idea of the effect of indirect taxation upon their comforts; and to show them, although the tax-gatherer does not absolutely and literally call at their doors for the duties, that they are taxed heavily upon almost all they eat and drink, and upon almost every thing they use and wear. And they are further told and taught that they are so taxed to support the wasteful expenditure of the higher classes.

The Cholera does not make much advance in England. The number of deaths in London last week from all diseases was 1,184, the average being 1,154. Of these deaths 189 were from scarlatina and typhus, and only 34 by cholera. The deaths by cholera throughout England and Scotland continue to equal about half the number of cases. We have not yet heard of the cholera in Ireland.

The bread bakers of London appear to have had more than their proportional share of commercial and trading difficulties. It might have been supposed that, dealing as they do in the most necessary and universal article of home consumption, they would scarcely have felt that stagnation and falling off of business which all trades must have experienced that principally depend upon a foreign market; but the reverse appears to have been the case. A meeting of the bakers of London has lately been held, at which it was stated that the number of bakers in London was about 2,400, and that nearly 800, or one-third of the whole number, had become insolvent during the last twelve months. It was also stated that some steps were necessary, not only for the protection of the trade, but for the benefit of the public, who, in buying what they considered a cheap article, were supplied with food of a deleterious quality, and highly injurious to health; and that a large quantity of bread sold was not fit for human consumption. From this unfair competition, it frequently happened that the quarter loaf had risen in price when the price of flour had fallen, and vice versa. In the year 1814, when the Lord Mayor regulated the price of flour, the baker was allowed a profit of 13s. 4d. on the sack of 20 stones, or 280 pounds weight. He did not now realize that kind of amount. The bakers appear to desire to regulate the price of bread by means of an association, to be called "The Bakers' Assize Association." This does not seem to us to be the proper mode of doing it. Let the municipal authorities severely punish those who sell bad bread, and the evil will soon cure itself. Combinations of trades are always bad. Fair competition, under the protection of the law, must always be the best mode of securing to the public a good article at a fair price.

There is but little news from FRANCE. The two points of interest are the Presidential election and the state of the finances. The latter is becoming the more serious question of the two, for it is that upon the solution of which must depend the stability of any Government and the return of national prosperity. It appears that the Government statements of the absolute condition of the treasury and of the prospects of the revenue are considered as being very unsatisfactory, and that the 143,000,000 of the latter melt down into an astonishingly small sum under a little examination. Items are put into it which no financial experience justifies, and are not negotiable, such as mortgages, &c. Government stock to a large amount is also improperly included, and credited at a value forty per cent. greater than it would realize in the market. In fact, the whole statement is regarded as obscure and evasive, and worse than no statement at all. This is a very vulnerable point in the peace and prosperity of France.

As respects the Presidential question, very little can be stated with certainty. One thing appears, however, clear—Gen. CAVAIGNAC is every hour becoming a more formidable opponent to Prince Louis, and will run him much closer than was expected. At Marseilles, Nismes, and some other principal cities, CAVAIGNAC will be supported almost unanimously. He will have, it is said, half a million of votes in Provence alone, and a very large majority in the departments of Hérault and Le Gard. The great majority of Representatives have pronounced in favor of Gen. CAVAIGNAC. In fact, very nearly half of them are now in the provinces canvassing for him; so many having obtained their congé from the Assembly that it is with difficulty a quorum can be mustered for the transaction of business. An association of the members of the Assembly has been formed at Paris, under the Presidency of M. BUCHÉ, to promote Gen. C.'s election. M. DE LAMARTINE has not, it appears, relinquished his candidacy. He seems to think, like your pure-minded WILLIAM LOWNDSE, that an office of such importance and dignity is neither to be sought after nor refused. The *Courrier Français* and the *Bien Public* have taken up M. DE LAMARTINE's cause very warmly. LOUIS BLANC has been solicited by his friends to become a candidate, but he declines doing so, stating that, in his opinion, "there ought to be no President, the Presidency being the remains of monarchical prejudices." LUDWIG ROLLIN still continues to be a candidate, and a portion of the *Red Republicans* will probably vote for RASPAIL, or some other of his stamp.

But if there be no news from France, we have an abundance from GERMANY; so much so that we scarcely know how to make a short abstract of it. Beginning with PRUSSIA, it may be observed that the sittings of the National Assembly at Berlin have been broken up by the military; that the burger guard have been in great measure disarmed by the same agency, but without bloodshed; that the Assembly, before its final and forcible dissolution, voted the refusal to pay taxes after the 17th instant. This vote, the Minister EICHMANN says, is contrary to law, and warns the people not to attend to it. "The judges in the criminal courts have resolved not to take cognizance of any charges against political prisoners," as all law, they say, "is at an end." Late intelligence states that the King has determined to withdraw the decree adjourning the Diet to Brandenburg, and that M. GRABOW, formerly President of the National Assembly, has been charged by his Majesty to form a new Cabinet.

If we turn to VIENNA, we find very little to give us satisfaction. General WELDEN, co-worker with RADEZKI, has been appointed Governor of that ill-fated city. JELLACHICH quitted Vienna for Hungary on the 14th, and Prince WINDISCHGRATZ was about to follow. The entire subjugation, if not annihilation of the MAGYARS, is the next step in the catalogue. In Austria, as well as in France, the state of the finances is becoming very serious. There is a deficit in the revenue during the last eleven months of no less than sixty millions of florins. The last news from Vienna brings an account of the execution of M. MESSEHAUSER, the commander of the national guard, during the late outbreak. The proceedings at VIENNA seem to be as little approved of at FRANKFORT as those at BERLIN. The Emperor is about establishing his court at Prague. It can hardly be, however, that the Central Parliament at Frankfurt will allow so fair a portion of the Fatherland as Austria to become a mere province of Slavonia. The Diet at FRANKFORT appears to have had its policy materially changed by the recent events in Prussia and Austria. It has become more decided and liberal. The following resolution was carried without a debate:

"The National Assembly, protesting before all Germany against the arrest and execution of the Deputy ROBERT BLUX, which took place in contempt of the law of the empire of the 30th of September, summons the Ministry of the empire to take the most energetic measures to cause those persons to be tried and punished who took part, directly or indirectly, in this arrest and execution."

We have yet to hear what will be the rejoinder from VIENNA. At LEIPZIG and DRESDEN the execution of Blum has caused the greatest excitement against Austria. At WÜRTEMBERG the Chamber of Deputies has passed a series of resolutions, calling on the Central Government at Frankfurt to take in hand the Prussian affair, and treat it as its own, to protect the Prussian Assembly against the Ministry, and to preserve the Prussian people from military despotism. M. TROBE, the fellow Deputy with ROBERT BLUX at Vienna, and who had also been sentenced to death, but who afterwards paroled, has arrived at Frankfurt, and made a great sensation in the Assembly by his account of the arrest, trial, and execution of his associate. Strong resolutions against the proceedings at both Vienna and Berlin were under discussion.

Another week will develop masters of great importance to the peace and prosperity of Germany; but no one can venture to prophesy what they will be. There appears to be no doubt, however, that the Archduke JOSEPH and the Central Parliament will support the cause of the people of both Austria and Prussia against their imperial and royal oppressors.

The only news from SPAIN is, that the Carlist war is on the edge of termination through negotiation. It is said that CARRERA is to be restored to his rank, titles, &c. upon laying down arms. What concessions are to be made to the Count of MONTENLOPE is not stated. The *Gazette de Madrid* contains an official contradiction to the reports respecting negotiations being on foot for the sale of CUBA to the Government of the United States, as stated in the American papers.

Nor do the papers of the week furnish us with much news from ITALY. The severities permitted by RADEZKI at Milan had caused strong resolutions to be passed at TRIESTE. The heavy contributions which he has levied in Lombardy will press ruinously upon the noble families of VISCONTI, BARNONZO, LITTA, and PRO; whilst the family of CASATI will lose all its property by this iniquitous tax. Every thing is quiet in SICILY. The King of Naples is said to be willing to make large concessions to Sicily, to grant the constitution of 1812, and an independent government under one of his sons as sovereign. A stranger account is, that the King had applied to the Emperor of Russia to take a part in the proposed mediation, and that the latter had responded, unexpectedly, by a recommendation to the King to make large and liberal concessions!

The news from INDIA is, that the Supreme Government had decided upon the permanent annexation of the Punjab to the British territories in India; that the whole country would be immediately occupied; and that the Bengal army was to be increased 15,000 men.

Nothing particularly interesting in the *Literary* world; and very little in the *Theatrical*, excepting the astonishing *furor* with which "God save the Queen" is sung every night by an overworked audience at Drury Lane Theatre, to the crash of four military bands and the powerful regular orchestra of the theatre. John Bull is most viciously loyal at this time. *Punch* has a very fair hit upon the circumstance.

We will say nothing about your Presidential election until we are quite sure of the result. The *Times* of the 21st has an excellent article upon the character, &c. of Gen. TAYLOR, taking it for granted, as we are very willing to do also, that he is to occupy the White House for the four next years.

NOVEMBER 24.—No news whatever this morning, except that the insurrection at the Cape of Good Hope has been put down by a defeat of the insurgent Boers. A great debate will take place in the National Assembly at Paris to-morrow, when important developments are expected. Gen. CAVAIGNAC has dared all his opponents to the issue. All the absent members have been recalled by telegraph, and a house of at least six hundred is expected. We shall be much disappointed if the General does not come off victorious. The King of PRUSSIA is more obstinate than was expected.

EXTRACTS FROM THE NEWSPAPERS.

FROM THE LONDON TIMES OF NOVEMBER 21.

The election for President of the United States took place on the 7th instant. Under present circumstances it is impossible not to regard peace and war, or rather a friendly and a quarrelsome policy, as the alternatives chiefly at issue. On this view of the case the choice made by the States calls for our warm congratulations. Gen. Taylor's military reputation is not our business to exalt. The Mexican war was no concern of ours, but it was impossible not to admire the daring, the hardihood, and the skill of an invasion conducted into the heart of a distant country, under a tropical climate, with an army of volunteers, and carried to the metropolis and last citadel of the empire. But Gen. Taylor has better qualifications for government than his. His speeches, his letters, and his whole conduct show him to be a gentleman, a man of temper, of conciliatory habits, and good sense. The humanity of which he has given many proofs in his military career has been equally conspicuous, though doubtless equally tried, in the new field of political warfare. The mild tone of the General's addresses shows that he can spare his fellow-citizens as well as his foes, and respect feelings as well as life and property. It is something, too, that he is not a party man. He has been selected by the Whigs—that is, the conservative and traditional school—not for any opinions he had ever expressed, but as a *clarus vir*, a clear-headed man, likely to unite many suffrages. He was offered, in fact, as a compromise to all parties. As such he has been accepted by a majority of the more respectable citizens, and as such he has been denounced and condemned by the firebrands of the Union.

Gen. Cass, it must not be disguised, would have been a serious danger, and we are thankful to be spared him. He is a fanatic even hater of our institutions, empire, and race, with sufficient authority to inspire dangerous designs, and sufficient rashness to lead him to the attempt. When the General represented his Government at Paris, he made himself remarkable for the continual bitterness of his tone to this country. He appeared to have imbibed those fabulous and vulgar notions of the British policy of the East-India Company which Cass has embodied in his novel, and which the lowest portion of the American press industriously propagate with ever-increasing exaggeration. Ever since February he has been loudly proclaimed as the man for the crisis, and as the most suitable gift the United States could offer to the genius of revolution in the Old World. America, it was assumed, must be invoked, and, if not, would at least make an opportunity similar to a *clarus vir*, a clear-headed man, likely to unite many suffrages. He was offered, in fact, as a compromise to all parties. As such he has been accepted by a majority of the more respectable citizens, and as such he has been denounced and condemned by the firebrands of the Union.

ADDRESS OF THE REGENT OF GERMANY. The *Cologne Gazette* contains the following address of the Archduke Regent to the people of Germany:

TO THE GERMAN PEOPLE.—"Germans! I address you at a most serious crisis as regards the interest of our Fatherland. Listen to my words with confidence. A lamented schism has occurred between the Crown and the popular representatives of Prussia! The people of Germany have taken part in this contest, and have thereby exposed themselves to a great loss, maintained a peaceful and legal attitude. The voice of passion, however, resounds through the land, and extends with inflammatory fury. A part of the Prussian Deputies have resolved to withhold the taxes. By so doing, they have loosened the bands of political existence, deeply shaken the foundations of civil society, and brought Prussia, and with it the whole of Germany, to the verge of civil war. Prussians! the representatives of Germany, at Frankfurt assembled, have, in this momentous crisis, uttered the soothing words of peace. The Imperial Assembly has expressed a wish that the King of Prussia should surround himself with advisers who enjoy the confidence of the country. It has solemnly pledged itself to maintain the rights and liberties promised and insured to you; it has promised you protection against any attempt to violate them. It has, however, at the same time, declared the resolution of the Prussian deputies to withhold the taxes wholly null and void. Prussians! The Imperial Assembly at Frankfurt represents the German nation in the aggregate, and its decision is supreme law (*oberstes Gesetz*) to all. Germans! I will act in full accordance with the Imperial Assembly. I will not allow the resolution which, by presenting the levy of the taxes in Prussia, endangers the prosperity of the whole of Germany, to be carried into effect. I will, however, enforce the fulfilment of the pledges given for the security of the rights and liberties of the Prussian people; they shall remain intact, as well as those of all our German brothers. Prussians! I rely upon you, that you will stand by me—that you will not allow the resolution which, by presenting the levy of the taxes, endangers the prosperity of the whole of Germany, to be carried into effect. I will, however, enforce the fulfilment of the pledges given for the security of the rights and liberties of the Prussian people; they shall remain intact, as well as those of all our German brothers. Prussians! I rely upon you, that you will stand by me—that you will not allow the resolution which, by presenting the levy of the taxes, endangers the prosperity of the whole of Germany, to be carried into effect. 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